In point of fact, Nathan Rothschild was nowhere near the field of battle, remaining in London throughout these critical days, and leaving for Belgium, *under instruction from the British Treasury,* only on June 20th—two days after Wellington's overwhelming victory. It was true that, owing to his admirable news-service, he had learned the result of the great encounter before anyone else in England. But, far from keeping it to himself or profiting by it, he hastened to communicate with the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, who refused to believe him. As for the allegation that he had depressed the market by hinting at a British disaster, the truth is that from the first (as the reports in the contemporary Press shew) he had bought openly and largely, in the face of an incredulous and falling market.

An episode of English history more glorious than the Battle of Waterloo was the abolition of slavery—"among the three or four perfectly virtuous pages in the history of nations", as Lecky called it. This culminated in the Bill of 1833 for the abolition of slavery in the British dominions—especially, of course, in the West Indies. A sum of £20,000,000 was necessary for payment as compensation to the slave-owners. It is significant that the finding of this amount was Nathan Meyer Rothschild's last great operation, before his death in 1836.[1]

His son, Baron Lionel de Rothschild, inherited no small share of his business acumen, and something more

*It is not without its significance that one of the few planters in the West Indies who anticipated Government action by doing something for the manumission of slaves was Isaac Simon, grand-father of the late Serjeant Sir John Simon, the eminent lawyer and philanthropist. This was not unnatural; for the slave legislation of

the Bible, itself remarkable for its humanity (cf. Exodus xxi. 26f; Deuteronomy xxm. 16) had been yet further developed by tradition. Thus the precedent of the English "Somerset Case" was anticipated at least fifteen centuries earlier by a Rabbinical decision, that an escaped slave, whether Jew or Gentile, automatically regained his freedom on touching Palestinian soil.